



IDAHO BREW MAGAZINE

Craft Beer Culture in the Gem State

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HOW TO DRINK CRAFT BEER

by Mikey Pullman

Since this is the world famous *Idaho Brew Magazine*, I'm going to assume that most of you reading this are already fond of craft beer. You are probably sitting alone for a moment, or perhaps your cell phone has lost its charge and the person sitting across from you is taking sixteen photos for Instagram so you have nothing else to do. You picked up this printed page in an effort to both enjoy and enrich your life, and you are brilliant for doing so. Perhaps you are a regular reader of this fine publication, in which case I am certain you have a wonderful future ahead of you and it's clear that your excellent decision making skills should qualify you for a promotion at work, make sure to tell your boss that I said it was okay.

Most likely, in front of you most sits a half-finished IPA or, if you have facial hair, an oatmeal stout. You have already mastered the art of enjoying craft beer, and we made this magazine for you, except for this article, which is for the guy (or gal!) that has never had a craft beer before in their soon to be enriched lives. And, if this person is you reading, perhaps a youngling out for a night on the town or an old dodger recently returned from the troubles, I am here to help usher you into the craft beer drinking fold.

You would think there wouldn't be much to it, that sampling the rich and dulcet tones of a locally produced amber is, in action, comparable to quaffing whatever robot urine the corporations are selling that you currently think of as beer. It isn't but, as the uninitiated, you will be forgiven.

Once.

Ordering, & then drinking, craft beer is an art that is quickly learned, but can take a lifetime to master. The first thing you need to know is what kind of beer you should be ordering. Take a long hard look at all the funny/ironic names and fancy colors being thrown about you catch your attention. Then, after you've had time to mull it over, just ask for a taste of everything.

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A LITTLE SOMETHING WE CALL... STYLE

by Ken Bates

Beer nerds, like myself, and like many of you, if you are reading this fine publication, are into Style. Or, I should say "styles". "What style is this beer?" "Is this beer true to style?" "Is there even such a thing as this style?"

The Beer Judge Certification Program is the recognized standard for judging and categorizing beers and deciding on styles. Currently there are 70+ separate styles of beer. Well, more accurately about 28 but there are a few "sub-styles" within each style.

IPAs (or India Pale Ales), are named for where the beer was headed when Great Britain was still trying to colonize the known world, including, specifically...you guessed it, India. Hops have an anti-bacterial property and they had to add a lot of it to the beer to help it survive the long journey it had to make by ship. Can't have the British garrison in Bombay getting thirsty...or sick from spoiled beer, now can we? Since the development of refrigeration, the hoppiness stayed but for a different reason. People liked the hoppy, bitter flavors.

That style has been enjoying a lot of popularity these days. Especially in the U.S. where just about everybody either is or knows a "hop-head". But not everyone knows, there are a few types within this category. English IPAs are not quite as bitter, and the hop flavors are not as sharp and citrusy as their American counterparts, in particular the "west coast" IPAs that San Diego breweries like Green Flash, Stone and Ballast Point have been famous for. Imperial IPAs are simply bigger, badder, hoppier, and generally more obnoxious than both.

They basically bullied their way into creating their own sub-style. But don't confuse them with Barley Wines, which are kind of like Double IPAs but often less hoppy and usually focusing a bit more on a heavier bodied higher ABV in the final product.

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1,001 Ways to Screw Up Beer: FORTIFIED BEER; AN ASCENT TO THE PINNACLE OF MADNESS

by Justin Baldwin

It was somewhere about 9 o'clock when the booze began to kick in.

Was it hubris which compelled me to fortify an unremarkable wee heavy with a fifth of cheap scotch? Or was there something else? Had my addiction to experimental homebrewing become so strong that I was willing to throw away any inkling of common sense on a KY-coated Slip-n-Slide decent into the very depths of what a bad beer could become?

With a mad cackle I kegged the beer, poured the scotch on top, and put the gas to it. No thought of blending to taste. No worry about ratios or possible ABV. I callously ignored the Reinheitsgebot weeping in the corner, broken and abandoned.

I'm not sure what I hoped to accomplish. Was there some quality inherent to Highland Stag brand scotch which would lend itself to a beer? The peat-smoke character reminiscent of thousands of Scottish peasants coughing up emphysema-blackened lungs is not a nice flavor anyway; could beer somehow make it better?

No.

The carbonated beer was a Brillo Pad handy. Scratchy and unforgiving, it wasn't as sharp as a shot, but there was something unpleasant there, as if each glass had been personally tea-bagged by Groundskeeper Willy. But at the same time, it wasn't so unpleasant as to be undrinkable. The scotch numbed the throat first, and after the first glass the other senses became lax and lazy.

Human trials were needed in order to observe the effect on consciousness. So, I invited a couple of college friends, J.R. and Jack, to have a beer-drinking weekend. They prided themselves on being West Coast beer dorks but I had to wonder, *Could they even handle the Scotch-Scotch Ale? Would something like this ruin them on beer forever?*

No use screwing around, so I filled big 30 oz. mugs. Initially, they bitched about the taste; throwing around words like: "possible infection," "fusel alcohol," and "crappy." A simple questioning of their masculinity and they had chugged their first mugs. Weak minds begets weak wills.

By the end of the third mug I heard a roaring in my ears. Like the top two valves of a 4-barrel carburetor taking hold, I could feel a sudden shifting in time and space as the scotch began to kick in.

The first noticeable effect was a sudden disintegration of cognitive function. J.R. had been regaling us with some story of Portland when, mid-sentence, he lapsed into inane gibberish. With gleeful horror I watched his brain shut down to the point he was unable to form sounds into words.

The next stage was fear. J.R.'s lizard brain realized he had somehow latched onto something which was beyond his control -- the proverbial dog tied to a car bumper. He fought to choose an action. "Bed go me. Sleep time is," he said, taking four steps toward the guest bedroom before he collapsed in the hallway.

For Jack the creeping madness came slower, like a touchy uncle watching from the shadows. He laughed at his

apparent triumph over J.R. and drank another half a mug of English Oppression Scotch Ale.

His terror came with the darkness as his room began to expand into the non-Euclidian angles of a cycloptian wasteland. A spinning bed, a cold sweat, and a mouth suddenly filled with saliva; Jack knew the sickness was on him. The panic carried him out of the bedroom, through the kitchen, down the stairs and out into the back yard; his hand pressed against his mouth in a vain attempt to hold back a tidal wave of vomit.

Once in the back yard Jack collapsed in the dirt as his body tried to turn itself inside out. Once the bile was ejected his stomach filled with booze-fueled remorse. Using drunk logic, he crawled back into the house and removed his pants so he wouldn't make a mess.

By tracking his trail of vomit, I found him the next morning. He was asleep in the bathtub, wrapped in the shower curtain, and lacking pants.

I had found what I wanted. The proof my experimentation had gone too far. Just because I could do something didn't mean I should. When I looked on the hangover wracked forms of my friends I was filled with a mixture of shame and sick glee for causing them pain. The remorse made me dump the keg but the masochistic pleasure caused me to write it all down.

On the other hand, if someone offers you free beer there is always a catch. ☺☺

Follow Justin on Twitter at @Screwupbeer and see if you can tell the difference between drunken raving and sober ranting.



SEPTEMBER BEER HAPPENINGS

by Boise Beer Buddies

- Sept 13: International Sour Beer Day!
- Sept 16: Beer/Brat Fundraiser at Smoky Mountain Pizza on Parkcenter Benefiting Boise Hive
- Sept 18: Adult Night at The Discovery Center Featuring The Science of Brewing
- Sept 13: Boise Craft Beer Festival at Memorial Stadium
- Sept 20: Oktoberfest Parking Lot Party at Edge Brewing Co
- Sept 20: Sawtooth Brewers Oktoberfest at Ketchum Town Square
- Sept 27: B'Arc Brewfest at Highlands Hollow Brewhouse
- Sept 27: Wilder Oktoberfest
- Sept 28: Drink Beer Day - *It's Christmas for brew lovers!*

(Find event links at BoiseBeerBuddies.com)

Get the scoop on EVERYTHING happening in craft beer in Boise and beyond delivered to your inbox weekly. Become a Buddy and get discounts at Buddy Hubs all over town!

BoiseBeerBuddies.com



Beyond Idaho Beer BEST MORNING BEERS

by Steve Koonce

The return of HBO's Hard Knocks and two-a-days at Boise State mean that fall is coming in the Northwest, and that means football. Football means many things but, most importantly, it means an opportunity to drink beer in the morning.

Having lived on both coasts, I can tell you with some amount of confidence the best things about being in either time zone. There are pros and cons to each. For instance, you wake up earlier on the East Coast, thus getting news and information before the lazy bums out west. A great thing about living on the West Coast is that we don't have any humidity ... like at all. But one of the best things about being in the Mountain West is that Saturday and Sunday football both start in the morning.

The 11am kickoff on Sunday is great for two reasons: it doesn't give our significant others enough time to give us chores for Sunday (especially if you go to church) and it means we can start drinking no later than 10am for pregame & earlier if you tailgate.

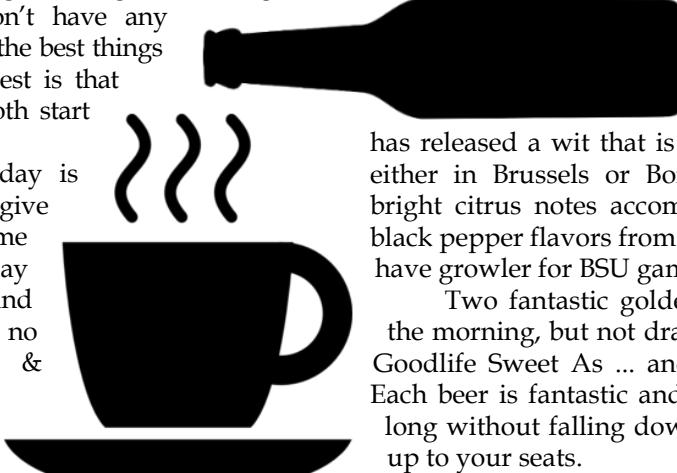
The go-to morning mixed drink of choice is the Bloody Mary. There will be no argument in this space and I don't care to hear your views on Mimosas and why you think they are superior to a well-made Bloody – because you're wrong. But I think we can start to make a pretty good argument for making beer your go-to morning drink.

A lot of large beer companies based in St. Louis will tell you that your mornings would be better served when you mix beer with tomato juice and have something called "red beer." You do not need to drink this. The options we have today dictate that you ditch this mid-western mixture and try something delicious in the morning that isn't some gross, clammy version of a fizzy yellow beer.

It's time we all grow up when it comes to getting loaded in the morning.

The best morning beers give you something familiar to weekday morning beverages. These flavors are typically coffee, tropical and citrusy fruit juices or something light and sweet. This means we can cut out most IPA's, pale lagers, porters, pale ales and heavy Belgian style ales, because they simply don't bring any of those familiar flavors to wake you up, while numbing you out. Golden ales, coffee stouts, wit beers and sours make perfect sense to drink in the morning; the key is to find the right ones for Idaho beer lovers.

Coffee stouts are delicious. There are some coffee stouts that are barrel aged, like Epic Brewing's Big Bad Baptist, that bring flavors of vanilla and oak along with rich dark coffee and brown sugar. I would say that Big Bad Baptist, even at around 11% ABV, makes a wonderful morning beer when shared with a friend (or two).



Sweet coffee stouts are also quite good and would make for a more sessionable beer for the Bronco tailgate. I suggest Oakshire Espresso Stout, as it is light, sweet and offers a nice shot of coffee that will wake you up and get you going for the big game. I would also suggest Woodland Empire Ale Craft's In the Morning Mild, which has a bit of coffee and very little alcohol, meaning you can put down a growler and still be ready to man the BBQ for half-time.

Wit beers are really starting to take off in the Gem State and we have two awesome examples for imbibing before noon that will leave you refreshed and ready to paint your face. Selkirk Abbey's Chapel Wit Beer has wonderful orange flavors with notes of ginger, coriander and Belgian yeast that barely hits 5% ABV and tastes super smooth. Wanna take it up a notch? Try the Huckleberry Chapel, which adds a big huckleberry flavor along with notes of blue and blackberry that pairs fantastically with the citrus wit flavors.

Edge Brewing Company has released a wit that is as good as any you will ever try, either in Brussels or Boise, simply called Wit Beer. Big, bright citrus notes accompanied by ginger, coriander and black pepper flavors from the Belgian yeast make this a must have growler for BSU games.

Two fantastic golden ales that will get you going in the morning, but not drag you down for the afternoon, are Goodlife Sweet As ... and Grand Teton's 208 Session Ale. Each beer is fantastic and you can drink them all morning long without falling down the stadium stairs on your way up to your seats.

A lot of beer guys wouldn't steer you towards sours as a morning drink, but I maintain that there's no better way to jumpstart your palate than with a musty, zesty Belgian sour ale. I recently tried Danimals from Snake River Brewing in Jackson Hole. While it isn't considered a "sour," Sockeye Brewery's Summer Belgian would also make a delicious breakfast brew (plus it comes in cans).

Ditch the Mimosas and, for God's sake, separate the Clamato from the Bud Light and go for one of these tasty options for pre-game consumption. Remember that the next time you head to the tailgate, a buddy's house or your own living room because drinking in the morning shouldn't be done haphazardly.

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Steve is the author of Idaho Beer: From Grain to Glass in the Gem State, the definitive guide to Idaho brew history and modern excellence. Pick up your copy today!

CORRECTION!

From last month's review of the Boise Brewing Grand Opening, we want to clarify: while the event reviewed did allow underage attendees (as it was outside), Boise Brewing itself is a 21+ venue. Also, the beer listed as "Broad Street Brown" is actually "Broad Street Blonde," and "Down Town Extra Pale" is actually "Down Down Extra Pale. Check out all the brews at BoiseBrewing.com

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Beer is made from hops, which are acquired from alpaca herders in Equator, and yeast, which can be found in the bed of any fast moving Idaho river water. The way these two ingredients are mixed, usually in large steel vats brooding suspiciously in a room adjacent to where you are currently standing.

My advice is to get something fruity, that way you can tell who your friends are by who will still sit with you. Once the bartender gives you your drink, pretend it isn't that big of a deal and tip at least 50% (A little known fact is that craft beer fans tip better than regular people, and will sometimes stop their favorite comedy writer on the street and give him fifty bucks). Then, feel free to lean against the bar and casually take your first sip.

Perhaps you are wondering if after all this you should be expecting something more than just a burst of flavor and the quenching of a secret thirst. I can't do much for you there, I am but a simple comedian who buys his underwear in thrift stores, but what I can tell you is this: craft beer is a wonderful smorgasbord of colors, tastes, personalities, zealots, dreamers, and friends. Your drink is the manifestation of the thoughts, hopes, and hard work of good people who live in the same place that you do, and every dollar that you spend on a drink in a place like this not only tastes better, but stays here with us. Other articles can teach you more about the language and culture of the craft beer brewed in this wonderful state, but this one is intended to let you know that there is heart, soul, and love in every drop of that sacred nectar from which you drink. So enjoy, and welcome.

Now go ahead and put down the magazine, I think your friend is finished taking those pictures. ☺☺☺

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An interesting case is the Cascadian Dark Ale/ Black IPA/ American-style India Black Ale. Somebody got the great idea a few years ago, to take their IPA recipe and add just enough dark roasted barley in it to give a dark brown, sometimes black color. This "style" has become so common and popular that it has made it to the official BJCP list as an IPA sub-style. There is no truth to the rumor that PIXAR was lobbying to have this style officially called a CDA.

Confused yet on the whole "style" thing? Oh, we're just getting started...

Take for example, the Stout. But that is not just one style. That would just be way too easy. It is actually 6 separate sub-styles. Sweet Stout, Dry Stout, Russian Imperial Stout, Oatmeal Stout, American Stout, and Foreign Extra Stout.

Really, everything is a sliding scale. An American stout is a bit drier than an Oatmeal Stout or Sweet stout, a lot drier than a foreign extra but a bit sweeter than a Dry Stout. A Russian Imperial Stout is more bitter and higher alcohol than all of them, but also usually has more residual sugars, thus technically making it sweeter than a Dry or an American. The Foreign Extra is sweeter and stronger (higher ABV) than the American and the Dry (obviously) but not as strong as the Russian Imperial or as high of alcohol content. The oatmeal stout is fairly sweet, but not as much as the Foreign Extra and certainly not as much as the Sweet Stout.

It's always good to know what style the beer that you are drinking is, so that over time you can develop a preference for, say, Doppelbocks, or Baltic Porters or even Unblended Lambics (if you dare). But past that, drink what you enjoy and try a few things that you wouldn't normally. Going off about whether this beer is "correct" for the style can be a real eye-ball-roller for the rest of the people at the table. ☺☺☺



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